

8 things you can do as a CIIfA member to advance your career opportunities in a COVID-19 world



**Chartered
Institute for
Archaeologists**

As a Student member, you may be wondering what to do right now to help you find work in archaeology. It is a very good idea to look for opportunities to get practical archaeological experience although in the current situation this is likely to be more tricky than usual. Excavation is continuing on some sites, but many archaeologists are working from home where possible or have been furloughed. In different times there would be more opportunities to volunteer with local archaeology companies but at present this is likely to have been suspended. However all hope is not lost -there are still many things you can do to get a head start on your career.

Here's some suggestions about what you can do to help keep things moving through these extraordinary times.

Make the most of your professional network:

You've already chosen to start a career as a professional archaeologist by joining CIIfA. You're now part of a large network of colleagues working in the heritage environment so use the resources that are available on our website. If you haven't already looked at the careers pages on [our website](#) that might be a good place to start. In addition, members can sign into our website and download our Professional Practice papers, access e-learning modules, and join any of our [21 Special Interest Groups](#) including New Generation SIG, which is aimed specifically at students and those just beginning their career in archaeology. Many of the groups have forums and social media that you can follow and engage with.

You could also join our Professional Pathways scheme which is designed to help you progress your career. If you're not sure how to sign in or where to join groups on the website contact us at admin@archaeologists.net

Keep your eyes on the JIST and BAJR:

As a Student member of CIIfA you receive a weekly jobs and training email bulletin (JIST), a regular e-bulletin with news from the profession and a digital copy of our magazine, *The Archaeologist*. Take the time to open these mailings. They're a really good way to stay up to date with and connected to what's happening in the archaeology sector. They'll send you information directly to your mailbox that you may not see anywhere else about current issues affecting archaeology. Read the Twitter and news feed on the CIIfA website for the most up to date developments.

If you're actively looking for employment, good places to look for opportunities would be our [jobs and training pages](#) and also the [British Archaeological Jobs & Resources \(BAJR\)](#). Currently anyone working must be working within government restrictions for travel and guidelines for social distancing so bear that in mind if you see jobs that aren't local to you that you need to travel to, or stay in shared accommodation.

Pick apart person specifications:

Whether you're looking for work now or not, it is useful to look carefully at the jobs being advertised. Have a look at the job and person specifications listed on the posting to see what they

are looking for and highlight what's essential and desirable. Think about how you would talk about meeting the given criteria. If it isn't something you've done recently, plan out how you will go about gaining those skills.

Get IT aware:

Get as up to date with IT skills as you can. Data entry and report writing are an important and essential part of archaeology. Some specialisms use IT more than others, such as Geophysics and digital illustration. Recent work by Eleanor Winter, Treasurer of ClfA Graphics Group, has written about popular software in her report [The Profession](#). All that said, lots of archaeological work is analogue - never underestimate the importance of neat, legible handwriting and good spelling!

Your Passport to work:

If you aren't aware of the BAJR Skills Passport through your university then you might find that it helps to record your experience and you can find information [about this here](#).

Get licensed:

A driving licence will often be requested or preferred by employers. Theory tests, lessons and driving tests [have now restarted](#) if it is something you've been considering. A CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) card will also often be asked for if you're applying to work on commercial archaeology sites. When you get your Practitioner grade you can use this to get a Professionally Qualified Person (PQP) card. Graduates from archaeology degree courses can apply for an Academically Qualified Person (AQP) card. There's more information on the [CSCS website](#).

Carry on learning:

Some of ClfA's Special Interest Groups have put together lists of online resources and you can find them on our [Coronavirus information page](#) and Diggers' Forum have started a '10 things' series that you can find [on their webpage](#) along with other useful advice. Write your [personal development plan \(PDP\)](#) and start a continuing professional development (PDP) log, and check out our [e-learning modules](#).

Update your CV:

You could take some time to create/review your CV. Make sure its in chronological order and relevant to each specific job you apply to and ask someone to read it to make sure it makes sense and that you haven't got any typos, etc. There's more CV tips [here](#) and you might also find [this article about expanding your future career](#) by ClfA's Senior Membership Services Coordinator, Kerry Wiggins, interesting.

We hope this gives you some ideas and if you have any specific questions please contact us through the details below.

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